

REMARKS

Claims 1-29 are pending in this application, of which claims 1, 4-6, 8, 16 and 23 have been amended. Claims 30-31 have been canceled. No new claims have been added.

Claims 4-6 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as indefinite.

Accordingly, claims 4-6 have been amended to correct the noted instances of indefiniteness.

Thus, the 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 1-3, 7-10, 14-18, 22-25 and 29-31 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,422,462 to Cohen (hereafter, "Cohen") in view of U.S. Patent 6,816,721 to Rudisill (hereafter, "Rudisill").

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Cohen discloses customized credit and debit cards for issuance by a person or main cardholder, the cards being limited to use in transactions at selected vendors only. Thus, for example, a parent or corporation can issue a customized card to a person or group, wherein the card is only valid for use at restaurants, airlines, hotels, certain stores, or so forth.

The Examiner has admitted that Cohen fails to teach the card having a minimum balance and comparing the after-transaction balance with the minimum balance in order to determine whether or not the transaction is valid, but has cited Rudisill for teaching these features.

Rudisill discloses a system and method of purchasing products and services using a prepaid wireless communications services account.

Column 3, lines 11-16 disclose that if a predetermined minimum balance is not maintained after the transaction is covered, the transaction is denied.

The combination of the teachings of Cohen and Rudisill teach only that transactions for selected vendors are permitted and that such "particular purpose" transactions are permitted only if the minimum balance is maintained after the deduction of funds is made. This is in contrast to the present invention, in which, if the transaction is for the particular purpose, the transaction is permitted regardless of whether or not the minimum balance is maintained. In the present invention, the transaction is prohibited if and only if the funds are not for the particular purpose and the minimum balance is not maintained, as recited in claims 1, 8, 16, 23 and 30 of the instant application.

Claims 1, 8, 16 and 23 have been amended to recite a step of allowing the payment within the range of the total balance in the medium if the result of the discriminating whether or not a payment is for said particular purpose is positive.

This step is not disclosed in either Cohen or Rudisill.

Thus, the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 4-6, 11-13, 19-21 and 26-28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Cohen and Rudisill and further in view of U.S. Patent 4,650,978 to Hudson et al. (hereafter, "Hudson et al.").

Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

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Response to Office Action dated January 12, 2006

Hudson et al. has been cited for teaching a bank cash card, a user loading the cash card with funds at a bank, the balance and other account information being stored on the magnetic strip on the card, and the card being used to make purchases.

Hudson et al., like the other cited references, fails to teach, mention or suggest the limitations of the independent claims, from which these claims depend.

Thus, the 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection should be withdrawn.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, claims 1-29, as amended, are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, Applicant respectfully petitions for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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